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P R E F A C E .

THIS Volume, being the tenth in consecutive order issued since the formation of the Kilkenny Archæological Society in 1849, was intended to constitute the first of the Third Series of the "Journal," coincident with the change of the title of the Association. Owing, however, to the gracious Letter of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, granting to the Association the honour of using the adjunct "Royal," and the privilege of electing Fellows, received at the close of 1869, it has been deemed right by the Committee to commence a fresh Series—the Fourth, with the year 1870.

It only remains to explain the delay which has occurred in issuing the concluding portion of the Volume ; and to express a hope that, although vexatious as preventing for so long the binding of the work, yet this delay will be found to the great advantage of the Association. The second portion of the very important historical contribution entitled "Unpublished Geraldine Documents," together with the numerous Plates and elaborate Pedigrees by which it is illustrated, have been presented to the Fellows and Members by the liberality of Mr. A. Fitzgibbon, who has defrayed the entire cost of the paper, printing, and illustrations—an example worthy of imitation by other descendants of Ireland's ancient families. The great benefit

thus conferred on the Association fully warranted the delay which the preparation and editing of this series of Original Documents and elaborate Pedigrees required. The difficulties of the latter can only be estimated by those who have conscientiously undertaken a similar task ; and the Editor craves indulgence for the inevitable errors which he knows must, notwithstanding all his care, have escaped him.

It is believed that the general contents of the Volume, the character and number of its illustrations, as well as the paper and typography of the work, evince an improvement on its predecessors. It comprises an edition of the Hymn of St. Patrick, being the first of a series of Texts taken from our most ancient Irish Manuscripts, edited by Mr. J. O'Beirne Crowe, B. A. ; whilst in the Proceedings and Papers many valuable facts illustrative of the History and Antiquities of Ireland will be found stored ready to the hand of the Student.

JAMES GRAVES.

INISNAG, *July 23, 1873.*